

Executive Proclamation

State of South Dakota

Office of the Governor

Whereas, National Wildlife Refuge System Centennial Day is hereby pronounced in South Dakota on March 14, 2003. This day is a time for the citizens of South Dakota to join thousands of others across the country in learning about and celebrating the centennial of the founding of the magnificent network of lands known as the National Wildlife Refuge System, which we, as United States citizens, have set aside for wildlife; and,

Whereas, National Wildlife Refuge System Centennial Day recognizes a century of conservation in the United States. President Theodore Roosevelt established the first National Wildlife – Pelican Island in Florida – on March 14, 1903, to protect herons, egrets, and other colonial water birds. During his Presidency, Mr. Roosevelt created 55 additional refuges; and,

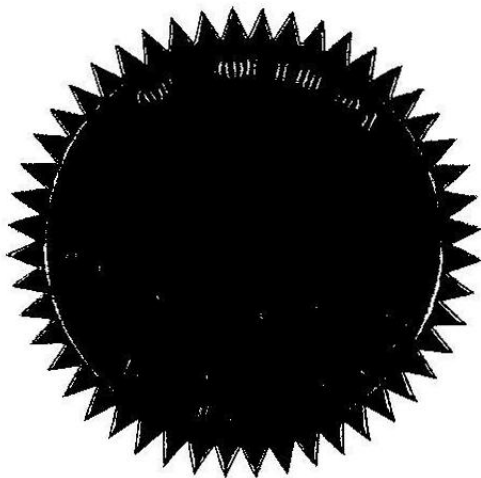
Whereas, Today, the National Wildlife Refuge System encompasses more than 540 national wildlife refuges and thousands of waterfowl production areas across the United States, including one or more in every state and U.S. territory. Covering nearly 94 million acres of land, the National Wildlife Refuge System is the only public land system in the world dedicated to wildlife and conserving wildlife habitat. National wildlife refuges encompass every kind of ecosystem in the U.S., including temperate, tropical, and boreal forests, wetlands, deserts, grasslands, and remote islands, and support hundreds of endangered and threatened wildlife species; and,

Whereas, Most national wildlife refuges are open to the public so that all can enjoy hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation, while learning about our natural heritage:

Now, Therefore, I, M. Michael Rounds, Governor of the state of South Dakota, in recognition of this important event, do hereby proclaim March 14, 2003, as

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM CENTENNIAL DAY

in South Dakota.



In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the state of South Dakota, in Pierre, the Capital City, this Twentieth Day of February in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Three.

M. Michael Rounds

M. Michael Rounds, Governor

Attest:

Chris Nelson

Chris Nelson, Secretary of State